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LETTER DATED 13 MARCH 1997 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE LIBYAN ARAB JAMAHIRIYA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to transmit to you herewith a letter dated 12 March 1997 addressed to you by Mr. Omar Mustafa Muntasser, Secretary of the General People's Committee for Foreign Liaison and International Cooperation of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Mohammed A. AZWAI
Permanent Representative

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Annex

Letter dated 12 March 1997 from the Secretary of the General People's Committee for Foreign Liaison and International Cooperation addressed to the President of the Security Council

You are no doubt aware of the massive United States propaganda campaign that has been conducted in recent times against the Great Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya. That campaign has, however, begun to assume dangerous proportions, and this has prompted me to take the initiative of informing you and the members of the Council of the grave actions the United States Administration is preparing to take against my country.

The United States of America alleges that the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya has built an underground chemical weapons factory in the Tarhunah area, which is a claim that is completely groundless. Numerous guests of the Jamahiriya have visited the area since the enterprise is a part of the Great Man-Made River project.

On 27 February 1997, Jane's Defence Weekly quoted Jonn Kennedy, spokesman for the United States Strategic Command, and Eugene Habiger, Commander of Strategic Forces of the United States Air Force, as saying that the United States had made a nuclear bomb specifically designed for use against underground chemical weapons factories such as that at Tarhunah in Libya.

On 4 March 1997, George J. Tenet, Acting Director of Central Intelligence, stated in his annual report to the United States Senate Intelligence Committee that Libya was among the 20 or so countries attempting to develop nuclear and biological weapons.

On 9 March 1997, The Times newspaper reported that Glyn Davies, spokesman for the United States Department of State, had stated the week before that the United States was more determined than ever to prevent the Tarhunah factory from beginning production. Mr. Davies added that the factory represented a delicate problem, that efforts were again under way to address the problem through the diplomatic channel, and that no one could deflect the United States from taking the measures required to prevent Libya from carrying out its chemical weapons production programme.

In bringing this dangerous attitude on the part of the United States Administration to your attention, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya wishes to state as follows:

1. The country does not have the technical, physical or human resources to manufacture weapons of mass destruction, since its principal concern is to promote its economic development plan and to mitigate the adverse impact that the coercive measures imposed on our people have had on all aspects of life.

2. The Libyan Arab Jamahiriya has already indicated that it is willing to receive an impartial international commission in a framework that includes

countries of the region in order to inspect all installations allegedly producing weapons of mass destruction.

3. The installations located in the Tarhunah area are part of the Great Man-Made River project, which is an enormous enterprise designed to supply the city of Tripoli and its agricultural environs with fresh water from aquifers deep beneath the Libyan desert. This is a project unique of its kind, and all the delegations that have visited it and seen it have attested to that fact.

4. The Middle East, of which the Jamahiriya is a part, is a region that seeks security and peace and aspires to the development of its peoples. Accordingly, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya will not alone forsake the consensus established by the peoples of the region, with the exception of the Israelis, who possess weapons of mass destruction and are being helped in acquiring them by the United States.

5. The Libyan Arab Jamahiriya rejects intimidation and escalation with regard to issues of concern to the international community such as the question of weapons of mass destruction. My country has on various occasions in the past urged the elimination of such weapons by means of international agreements, as is indicated by the fact that it has signed the African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty.

The Libyan Arab Jamahiriya urges the Security Council to monitor closely the problems of a region that has long suffered from conflict and warfare. It stands ready to cooperate with the Council in achieving security and peace for the peoples of the region.

In informing you of the foregoing, I express the hope that the members of the Council will take note of the threats made by the United States against my country and that the Council will do all in its power to avert the dangers they represent. I should be grateful if you would have the present letter circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Omar Mustafa MUNTASSER
Secretary of the General People's
Committee for Foreign Liaison
and International Cooperation